



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION
DESERT DISCOVERY CENTER SUB-COMMITTEE
REGULAR JOINT MEETING**

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009

**ECONOMIC VITALITY DIVISION OFFICE
CONFERENCE ROOM**

**4021 N. 75TH STREET SUITE 102
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251**

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: BJ Heggli, Chairman
Melinda Gulick (telephonic, departed at 4:52 p.m.)
Mike Surguine

ABSENT: David Richard

STAFF: Kathy O'Connor
Kroy Ekblaw
Kathy Montalvo
Cory Lew

GUESTS: Dan Gruber

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Heggli called the regular meeting of the Desert Discovery Center Committee to order at 4:14 p.m. A formal roll call confirmed members present as stated above, noting the presence of a quorum.

2. Approval of Minutes

- September 28, 2009 regular meeting minutes

COMMITTEE MEMBER SURGUINE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2009 REGULAR MEETING. COMMITTEE MEMBER GULICK SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF THREE (3) TO ZERO (0).

- October 19, 2009 regular meeting minutes

COMMITTEE MEMBER SURGUINE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 19, 2009 SPECIAL MEETING. COMMITTEE MEMBER GULICK SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF THREE (3) TO ZERO (0).

3. DDC Phase Two Feasibility Study Consultant Selection Process

Ms. O'Connor reported that the RFP went out the day after Council approved it. The Purchasing Department indicates there has been strong interest so far. Submittals are due November 5. In response to an inquiry from Chairman Heggli, Ms. O'Connor said Purchasing will screen the submittals to see whether they meet the purchasing requirements, but will not screen based on the Sub-Committee's criteria. Committee Members will have a chance to evaluate the applications individually before meeting as a group. The selection committee consists of the four DDC Sub-Committee members, along with Cory Lew, Kroy Ekblaw, and Kathy O'Connor.

Ms. O'Connor said any questions inquiries from the respondents are referred to her. She forwards them to Purchasing, who determines whether to issue an addendum. Once the evaluation process is complete, and Staff has prepared a contract, Council must approve it. Committee Member Surguine inquired whether the evaluation process could be completed in a month. Mr. Lew felt the target date of December 8 would be tight, considering the likelihood of interviews. Mr. Ekblaw added that the Council report would have to be finished by November 24, and the holidays would prevent much from getting done anyway. Committee Member Surguine inquired whether a January 12 deadline would jeopardize the timeline. Ms. O'Connor responded that the City would anticipate it by then, and be prepared to respond quickly.

Mr. Gruber inquired whether the proposals would be available to the public. Ms. O'Connor responded that until the selection is made, they would not. The selection committee should not discuss any information in order to protect the integrity of the selection process. Mr. Gruber inquired whether the TDC and the MSPC would review the selection committee's recommendation prior to the Council meeting. Ms. O'Connor noted that neither Commission would have reviewed the submittals. They vested that authority in the Sub-committee. Mr. Ekblaw noted that Council's letter authorizing the Sub-Committee, gave no indication that processes of the task should be subject to the Commissions. It would be very cumbersome if that level of detail were observed at every step. Each Commission will have the ability to review and comment on the results. Once the selection committee makes their recommendation, the report would become public record.

Chairman Heggli inquired whether the Sub-Committee's guidance to the consultants would come prior to, or after Council approval. Ms. O'Connor responded that many of the consultant's questions would emerge during the evaluation process. Mr. Gruber suggested that the Sub-Committee offer their perspectives when the consultants are in the exploratory stage. He also noted that site visits would have to be completed by mid-January.

Chairman Heggli inquired about the time it would take the Sub-Committee to evaluate submittals. Ms. Gulick said that during the Phase One evaluations, two areas that made the biggest impact were the consultant's approach and their experience with comparable projects. Three candidates quickly stood out. The Sub-Committee agreed tentatively to meet on November 17 or 18 to discuss the submittals, with the interviews and Sub-Committee decision occurring during the first week of December. Mr. Lew said it would take about one week for Staff to prepare the contract, and the process should conclude by December 18.

4. Review of Sub-Committee Tour of Desert Botanical Garden (DBG)

Chairman Heggli said the DBG tour was informative and well worth the time spent there. Ms. O'Connor said Staff would prepare a file on each facility consisting of notes and supplemental material gathered during the visits. Chairman Heggli felt the information on rotating exhibits was particularly valuable. Committee Member Surguine said the intangibles, the leadership and the vision impressed him. The DBG's vision statement was a perfect example. Ms. O'Connor read the statement from the articles of incorporation of 1937.

"The Garden's commitment to the community is to advance excellence in education, research, exhibition, and conservation of desert plants of the world, with emphasis on the southwestern United States. We will ensure that the Garden is always a compelling attraction that brings to life the many wonders of the desert."

Mr. Ekblaw read an excerpt from a speech from one of the Garden's founders, who said, "First we wish to conserve our Arizona desert flora, fast being destroyed, second, we wish to establish plantings for students and botanists, and third, we wish to make a compelling attraction." Their vision has been consistent for over 70 years.

5. Comparable Facilities Review and Site Visits

Chairman Heggli presented a spreadsheet of information on ten comparable facilities. The Sub-Committee discussed plans for the next site visit. Mr. Ekblaw said the format for other visits would remain the same, but travel-related issues still must be resolved.

Chair Heggli proposed that the first visit be to the Las Vegas facility. Committee Member Surguine said the Sonoran Desert Museum is of interest because it is a significant facility with a good draw. Mr. Ekblaw noted that the Monterey Bay Aquarium was suggested as an example, because it does a good job of highlighting the unique ecosystem of the Bay and is located in an urban setting. That would be comparable to the DDC's mission of focusing on the Sonoran Desert ecosystem. No visit would be required.

In response to an inquiry from Ms. O'Connor, Chairman Heggli said he did not think it would be realistic to visit all ten facilities. Ms. O'Connor noted the inherent difficulty of scheduling all four Committee Members. Committee Member Surguine did not think it was imperative that all visits be completed by the time the consultants are hired. He

proposed that the time spent driving to Tucson could be used to review the RFP submittals. Mr. Ekblaw said for purposes of open meetings, the Sub-Committee should avoid anything that would require taking action.

6. Work Plan and Timeline Update

Ms. O'Connor noted that the timeline has been updated following Council approval of funding for Phase Two. She suggested the work plan include all the subtasks required for each task. Chairman Heggli requested the addition of completion dates to the work plan.

7. Schedule Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on November 9. Chairman Heggli requested an agenda item to discuss the mission statement.

8. Public Comment

Mr. Gruber urged the Sub-Committee to think broadly, during the evaluation of proposals, about the experience of the consultants. Many of them are likely to have extensive experience with science centers and museums that have a high percentage of fixed exhibits, and a low percentage of changing exhibits. If dynamic programming is to be an important part of the DDC, the consultants should have experience with dynamic exhibit programming and performing arts.

9. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the Committee meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.